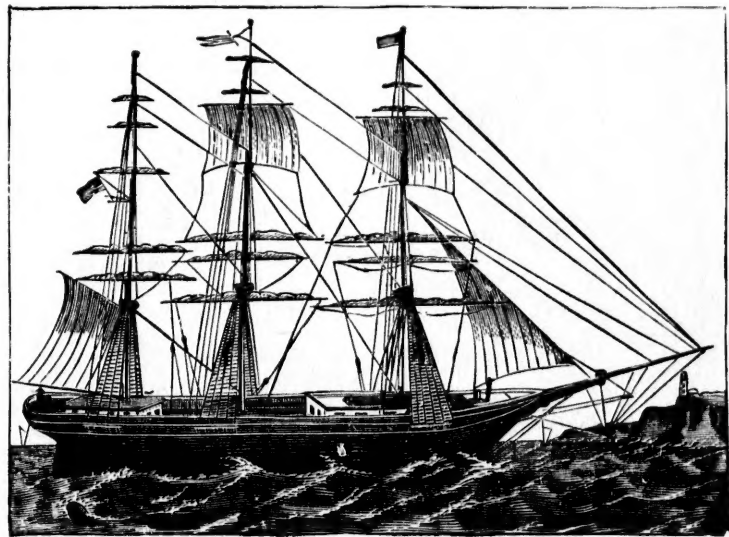


THE : EXILE
OF
THE ACADIANS



DEPARTURE OF THE ACADIANS.



THE PEOPLE OF
LONGFELLOW'S "EVANGELINE."



REVIEW
OF THE PEOPLE OF
"EVANGELINE,"
WITH
HISTORICAL SKETCHES
OF THE
PRESENT AND FUTURE.

BY
MDE. MOREL DE LA DURANTAYE.

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THE EXILE OF THE ACADIANS.

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The Acadians.

PART FIRST.

OF THE many who have read Longfellow's *Evangeline* with unbounded delight, how few there are who know that the plaintive, poetic story of Acadia is but a picture of a real people, illustrating their simple mode of life and their multiple misfortunes. Yet our Nova Scotia once bore that romantic name, and her people were the Acadians of history, romance and song.

The story carries us back to the long ago, when from the frozen sea to the tropical gulf, this vast country was a nearly unknown wilderness, its monotony being undisturbed save by a few English colonies on the Atlantic shore of what is now the United States, and like settlements by French in Canada, each claiming by assumed right that which belonged to neither, and each fiercely jealous of the acquirements of the other.

Thus the two most powerful nations of Europe sought extension of dominion and addition of wealth, while colonists, from various quarters and all classes, endeavored to improve their condition by casting their fortunes in the wilds of the "new world."

The experience of all these early pioneers was usually pitiful in the extreme, if not infrequently happening that they fall victims to cold, starvation and disease, to the hostility of neighboring adventurers, or to the tomahawk of the savage, to be finally either entirely destroyed or as a tattered remnant return to their old-time homes.

Among those who so early as 1604 cast their lot in the western wilderness was a body of French People from Normandy, who chanced to fix their new homes in Acadia, the peninsula now known as Nova Scotia. This effort proved a failure, especially because of the inroads of settlers from the English colonies of Virginia, who claimed the peninsula by right of discovery, and whose people, led by a freebooter, in the end utterly destroyed the colony.

The French government had given the rugged realm its tropical name, but in the turmoil of the nations, the English gained possession, and in 1621, with greater fitness, pronounced it to be Nova Scotia, or new Scotland. But neither tropical nor frigid designation brought settled quietude to its borders. It became the shuttlecock of war and diplomacy. In due time the French became its master, to be overcome by their persistent enemy in 1654. Thirteen years later the French were in power, fickle fortune returning to the English in 1714. Thus, experience had shown little certainty of tenure, and that the imperious Englishmen so deemed it is amply shown in the fact that the treaty by which it was secured to them contained the galling proviso that their new subjects, the Acadians, or French citizens of Nova Scotia, might enjoy freedom of worship, they being Catholics, while the English government was intensely Protestant, and still more, they were granted immunity from bearing arms, being thus permitted to enjoy the benefits of a government, and be in it protected, without raising a hand even in their own defense. This unprecedented favor may have partly risen from the fact that joining the English forces they would be brought face to face with her hereditary foe, and thus be compelled to do battle against personal friends and relatives; but, odious as this tacit citizenship must have been to the haughty English government it must be stated in justice to it that the treaty pledge was faithfully kept.

It seemed passing strange that the well-known vicissitudes and turmoil did not make a bar to immigration. But it did not do so. During each period in which France held

the land, her people, with consummate pertinacity, sought homes in Acadia; the English, with equal blindness, hurrying to their New Scotland during the time of their possession.

This seems all the more wonderful when the fact is recalled that the varied changes in mastery so briefly noted were always the results of harassing and bloody struggles, participated in by both French and English regular troops, the militia or citizen soldier of both sides, in every case each party being aided by the bloodthirsty savages, who spared neither age or sex, and in whose hands immediate death was usually a desired blessing. The cheek alternately pales with anger and blushes with shame, as we review the true history of the part taken by either party in these fierce contests for empire, contests that excited the deepest concern in the great capitals and courts of Europe three thousand miles away.

The Acadian people not only brought with them the habits of the Norman peasant, but adhered to their peculiarities with unyielding tenacity. In consequence of this, they became noted for simplicity of habits, for patient and persistent toil from which followed remarkable thrift; for devotion to the religion of their fathers, adherent attachment to their fatherland and an unlimited devotion to their new homes. Totally void of those ambitious aims that fire the hearts of other people, they sought nothing beyond their little land possessions, and luxuriant in the comforts found in their unostentatious habitations. Every impulse of their hearts centered there, no toil was too severe, if it but tended to increase their stock and store. The soil of the low grounds being most fertile, they built dikes, by which the waters were forced back, thus converting marshes into reclaimed fields where the cereals grew in abundance, while thousands of every variety of cattle grazed on the adjacent plains, indulging in none of the vanities that corrode and impoverish more pretentious communities, frugality reigned everywhere supreme. Without education, and relying on the "cure" for instruction and guidance in

all essential things, they kept aloof from others, desiring most to be by the bolsterous world forgotten. Absence of ambitious aims circumscribed their wants and rendered possible the existence of such a typical band of brothers, asking only to be permitted to enjoy their toil, their contentment, neighbors and religion.

It would seem that these meager favors were their due and should have been accorded them, but instead they were the shuttlelocks of the grim contestants for power and empire. Long, weary years of contention with repeated change of ruling powers had at last brought the treaty of 1713 before referred to, apparently bringing with it the long desired repose.

Under the English regime, in accordance with the terms of this compact, nearly half a century had passed, the Acadians being nominally English subjects, but clinging with the keenest ardor to old memories, bound in every heart sympathy to those who spoke their native tongue, and who in every way were to them most near and agreeable. In every sense their rulers were to them foreign, the name engrafted on their land cold and cheerless, their dreams revels in Acadia.

Thus the embers of unrest were ever warm in their bosoms, and calm and well disposed as they were, required but little effort to fan it to a brighter glow. To the interior Canadian colonies, conditions were ever present promoting to active effort. Nova Scotia, now an English province, occupied a position on their eastern borders that largely interfered with their access to the ocean, which was not only the highway of trade, but the only one through which they could maintain connection with France. Fierce tribes of Indians, ardently attached to the interests of the Canadian colonies, occupied adjacent lands, and secret emissaries were ever busy fomenting acrimonies in the hearts of both the gentle-souled Acadians and their neighbors, the brutal savages.

To the English, the accorded neutral citizenship was extremely distasteful, and when to this was added the

unrest wrought by the emissaries of France, it became odious. They were further both vexed and alarmed by the erection of a French fort immediately over the line. This was situated at Beausejours and adjacent to the district of Mines, on a narrow isthmus connecting Nova Scotia with the mainland of Canada, and seemed significant, as the Basin of Mines was the most populous and wealthiest of the Acadian settlements. Whatever the real purpose may have been, the fort and its occupancy by the French troops was a perpetual menace to the rulers of the province.

The tempest was slowly but surely gathering. But through all the perplexing situations the Acadian people kept as much aloof from participation as was possible for them to do. Their purpose and intent was to remain true to their obligations as neutrals, but being flesh and blood, and the continued prey of those who by secret persuasion and every possible device sought to lead them to some measure that would result to the advantage of the Canadian provinces, and through this means to the government of France, what could be expected as the result? With all this they so greatly preferred to till the soil, tend their herds, and live in quietude, that with far fewer exceptions than could be expected they persisted in pursuing their pastoral career.

At last the tempest had gathered its forces; a cloud of ill-omen overcast the sky. The drama of turmoil, of battle, of unrest and unchanging rulers, was about to terminate in tragedy. The innocents were again to suffer; the only ones that could be by any means accounted guiltless, were to be made the victims of an act that thrills every sensibility of the human heart.

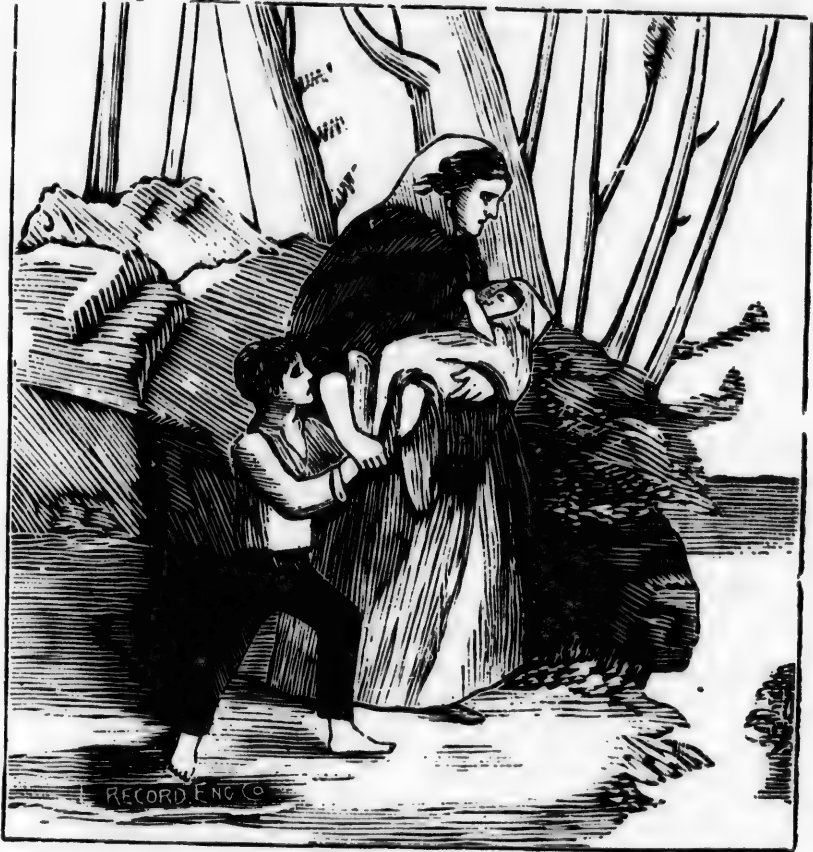
The American colonies were in fact a part of England and represented her interests, in precisely the same sense that the Canadian colonies represented their home government.

Through the instrumentality of the former, an expedition was fitted out in 1755 to reduce the fort at Beausejours,

the ultimate object being to destroy French influence in Nova Scotia, thus making it practically and really an English province like themselves. The fleet sailed from Boston harbor, and on arrival near their destination was joined by a force of British regulars under Col. Moncton, who took command of the whole. The negotiations with the English government and preparation of the expedition had been conducted with so much care that the occupants of the fortress were surprised at the appearance of the enemy. Their consternation quickly extended to the Acadians, who, with instinctive French predilections, required only a threat from the commandant of the French forces to lead many to cast their fortunes with them. Not knowing what was really involved, believing their all to be in peril at the hands of practical freebooters, they accepted the only apparent chance for self preservation. Rendered desperate by the gloomy outlook, some three hundred joined the troops in the fort, while many, being undecided to the last moment what was best to do, finally hid their families in the woods and fought the invader from any cover they could find. Heroic but mistaken purpose; idle effort; the hand of fate was upon them; they struggled against destiny!

The fort surrendered after feeble resistance, and the misguided Acadians were at the mercy of the English, who, having granted them neutrality, now found them traitors.

With mock generosity they were pardoned this grave offense, but there awaited them a doom no less grievous. It is this doom that every sentiment of humanity and common decency revolts, stamping the perpetrators as men, worthy the brand of Cain. No claim of precedent, no plea of national policy, can be made to hide the infamy of that which the hearts of all good men revolt. Precedent does not palliate wanton torture, physical or mental, more than it excuses the savage for burning his victim at the stake. The course pursued had not even the manly quality of fair, open dealing, but consisted in a series of schemes, in every one on which a trap was secreted, to the end that turn which



ALONE IN THE WOODS.

way they might, the intended victims must come at last to the same condition. The purpose was perfectly hidden until the fatal line was passed.

Having been forgiven for joining hands with the enemy in the recent contest at the fort of Beausejours, their hearts were sufficiently softened by the unexpected clemency, to respond promptly through their representative that they were willing to take the oath of allegiance to the British crown, a summons having been issued to them to determine the matter as to their willingness. These representatives were, however, astounded when informed that the old time treaty proviso, granting them immunity from bearing arms and especial religious privileges, could no longer be tolerated and would not be permitted. The oath must now be taken in full, without proviso or reservation, as an evidence of complete abandonment of any former allegiance. This measure was wholly unexpected, and to them, shocking to the last degree. The agents could not at once answer for their constituency, in fact, could do no less than go back to them for instruction in a matter so vital to their interests. When they returned for further consultation, the trap set at that point was sprung; it was pronounced too late. Accepting the delay as an evidence of unwillingness and insincerity, the oath could not now be taken at all or in any form, and their suppliants were the government's outcasts. Thus step by step the cords were being drawn closer, there being from the beginning no intended method of escape.

Wandering blindly in a desert of doubt, the peasants went on with their harvest labor, without a dream of calamity greater than had so often befallen them, that with it they were familiar, as with the face of an old time friend. It was just as well, as neither negligence or diligence could change their predetermined doom.

The further development and execution of the diabolical plot required great care and secrecy, from fear of a revolt, to quell which would result in slaughter in addition to infamy. Only such delay occurred as was unavoidable. While

the husbandmen were occupied at their labors, the commanding officers were busy perfecting every detail, and issuing the orders of the "Provincial Governor," who represented the British Crown, to his military subordinates, detailing their duty at each of the several French or Acadian settlements. Of these there were several, each one a little world within itself.

These officers, with requisite troops, repairing to the station assigned them, in conformity with their instructions, each issued an order directing, under penalty, that "all old men, young men and lads of ten years of age," should meet at a place designated, on September 5th, 1755, to hear a command of the Governor of the province.

On its face this notice was entirely innocent; and in some places was fully and in others not wholly complied with. Possibly some might have noticed that on that morning extraordinary military precautions had been very quietly taken, the strictest discipline observed, and the troops supplied with powder and ball. There could have been nothing beyond a suspicion, as the dread secret was unknown, save to a few trusty officers who were sworn to absolute silence and secrecy.

Grand Pre was a populous and thrifty village, surrounded by charming farms, with fields well tilled and barns overflowing from the recent harvest. A description of what transpired there will suffice for all, as the type was the same, and like agonies wrought everywhere. Col. Winslow, of Massachusetts, was assigned to duty in that district, and to the credit of his heart be it said, shrank from its performance with expressed disgust for being made the instrument of unwonted cruelty, but imperative orders forced him to obedience.

In compliance with official notice, "the old men, young men and boys of ten years" gathered in the village church at the appointed time. Few failed to obey the mandate, as suspicion was disarmed among them, and the orders of the Governor were of vital importance. Seated in their places

in respectful and painful expectation, they did not notice that the soldiers were quietly surrounding the building.

This done, the ranking officer in full uniform, representing his imperial majesty of Great Britain, after some preliminaries, read the fatal orders, which were nothing less than their property was all confiscated to the Crown, that all were to be removed from the province, leaving behind everything save such personal effects as could conveniently be carried with them, and that after the moment of reading, that they were prisoners, and with their families doomed to perpetual exile. The axe had fallen at Grand Pre, but not with like success at some of the settlements, especially that of Beau Basin and Annapolis, where suspicions had by some means been aroused, and only a portion reported as ordered. The recusants fleeing from the horror they faintly imagined, hid with their families in the woods, hoping against faith for something better than their fears had painted.

This awful communication, coming like a thunderbolt, so appalled the prisoners that they doubted what they heard, but all became too plain for doubt when they saw the stern sentry at the doors and beyond them the guard under arms. Then their strong hearts bowed under the weight of wretchedness. Instantly passed before them as in a panorama their homes, their families, and every sacred, associated tie suddenly wrenched from them; their fertile fields and well-filled barns, their herds grazing on the plains, to them blotted out forever. Anguish rent every heart; they were worse than free outcasts on the face of the earth.

Their families knew nothing of what had transpired, until the expected did not return, when inquiry caught the rumor, and, like the hot and suffocating simoom, the revolting fact spread abroad. Then arose shrieks of agony and lamentation in every home. In frenzy women and children rushed along the streets, wringing their hands in despair. It was the wailing of helpless women for absent loved

ones and for crushed hopes in every form—everything near and dear had been gathered by the hand of death, and amid desolation lay confined before them.

The picture with all its ghastly seeming was all too real, for means of escape there were none. Lamentations were powerless for relief, shrieks of agony could be answered only by kindred shrieks, while mothers pressed to their breasts babes that, like themselves, were pinioned to the wheel.

The early imprisonment may be regarded in the light of a precaution to prevent disorder, which, through some mischance, might have resulted from delay and arousing of suspicion. At least it was otherwise premature, as there were not at command a sufficient number of vessels to transport the members of the colony, which necessitated painful delay. Near the shore at Grand Pre lay five vessels, on which it was decided to place the prisoners as a means of security. The 10th of September was fixed upon as the day on which the male captives would be placed on board to be there guarded while awaiting sufficient transportation.

Five long, weary days passed by, doubt and hope alternating in the breasts of the imprisoned, and their families still in their homes. Would the captors carry away fathers, husbands, sons and brothers? Limited numbers under careful guards had each day been allowed to visit their families; would this blessed favor be taken away? were questions continually asked and ever answered by a hopeless moan.

Each circling sun sternly reduced the hours of stay, and when on the designated morn its light set all their beautiful land in glory before them, the drums were resounding in the village streets. At eight o'clock the church bell tolled into the desolate hearts that the fatal hour had come.

The melancholy column was formed and two hundred and sixty young men, in the advance, ordered to march on ship-board. The pride and strength of their manly hearts forbade obedience. They asked only for their families in

company. With them they could bow to the yoke, but to leave them they would not. This could not be, and while drums resounded the soldiery advanced with fixed bayonets. Appeals were vain, to resist with empty hands utterly hopeless. A few were wounded, when in despair the march began.

From the church to the shore the way was lined with women and children, mothers, wives, babes, those who tottered from age, and those whose cheeks were pallid with the touch of death. Neither pen nor pencil can picture a heart agony, nor can they portray the fierce sorrows of those who knelt by the way, greeting the prisoners with blessings, tears and lamentations, as they bade, as they yet fully believed, a final adieu. Trembling hand clasped hand that trembled, fathers for a moment only pressed their lips to those of wife and child as they moved on under the eyes of the stern guards, who dared not even, if they wished, brook the least delay. Thus all moved quickly along the melancholy path until none were left but those who mourned, and when from the vessel decks the imprisoned looked ashore, there stood their loved ones gazing through blinding tears to catch even a faint glimpse of those so cruelly wrenched from them. Riveted to the spot, the desolate women and children wrung their hands and wept until "tired nature" and the gloom of nightfall forced them to seek protection in their homes.

One act in this infamous drama had been completed, an act that brought shame into the English hearts who under orders were compelled to its execution.

There is a form of mercy in the ending of torture, but even this trifling boon was not for the unfortunate Acadians, for through long weeks of waiting for additional transports and supplies they lay in full view of their lost treasures.

Horried beyond measure, utterly powerless, incapable of thinking this cold inhumanity could be more than temporary, the women felt that the persecutors must relent; that the iron heart would soften, the relentless hand loose its hold and the imprisoned be returned to them. Soothed with



FIRST CHURCH OF ANNAPOLIS.

this "forlorn hope," they turned their attention to their varied duties, each day, by permission, carrying food from their tables to those on board the ships.

But the end was not yet. The event of September 10th was that of separation; that which was to follow was one of union, but not at the family fireside.

Again the drums beat, troops paraded under arms, and divided into squads, proceeded to the performance of the last act of the cruel tragedy. The labor of the housewife, the play of Acadian children in Acadia, was ended. For the last time had been heard their lullaby, for the last time the prattle of their babes. The order was imperative, the fatal hour of embarkment had arrived; mothers, wives and children must now join their imprisoned friends, not definitely as families, but as chance might determine. With this awful reality, the last hope was crushed and horror thrilled every heart. In bewildering grief and terror, almost unconscious of what they did, some prized treasures were gathered together. Still reluctant to go, the soldiery were compelled to force their departure, and amid tears hot with agony, mothers carried their children, friends bore the aged and infirm in melancholy procession to the boats that were to bear them to the vessels awaiting them near the shore. At each of the villages the same blood-chilling scenes were enacted, and then fire swept away homes, churches and harvests before their eyes. Flames burst through windows, crept over roofs; houses and barns melted like wax, while each stack of grain became a huge cone of smoke, streaked with fire, until nothing remained but a cloud that hung like a pall above the cinders that smouldered beneath. The exiles could only gaze, wring their powerless hands and weep.

In every locality the effort at capture had been well planned, and was executed thoroughly, both at the time of reading the order and afterward; the search for those who failed to come being pushed with earnest diligence. Still there were some who, with their families, escaped to the woods. In the utmost fright and destitution they hid as best

they could to bide the developments of time. No opportunity for counter effort was discovered by them save at Chipody, where, from their hiding places, they saw the flames bursting simultaneously from their houses, barns and churches. Instantly their blood became heated beyond endurance. Guided by anger and thirsting for revenge, they hastily hid their wives and children more securely, and few as they were, threw themselves unexpectedly on the enemy, who, broken by the furious attack, hastened to their ships, leaving forty-five dead and wounded on the field.

Whichever way they turned, the fate of these fugitives could be nothing less than deplorable to the utmost extreme. Their English persecutors were unrelenting and sought them ought in the most unfrequented places. Those that, by dint of watchfulness, suffering and dubious good fortune, escaped, either hid in rocky caverns, fens or marshes, subsisting by fishing and kindred methods, or joined their comrades who had united with the French before the battle at the fort, and shared with them their flinty destiny. Others found refuge in the wigwams of their savage friends or wandered to adjacent islands within the French borders, all hovering near their lost treasures. Detached groups found their way into the interior of the Canadian settlement, to receive such care as is meted out to the impoverished and disconsolate. Through some chance, a group of these people fixed their habitation on the Madawaska, where, having passed through indescribable privations, they gradually developed comforts, which, in time, ripened into prosperity and happiness, and there, at this day, may be found an untarnished type of the Acadian people.

Little bands found resting places within the provincial borders, at points remote from English settlements, their security consisting in their poverty and the unfrequented locality of their homes.

In 1763, the iron grip of the British hand slightly yielded its grasp, permission being then granted to the expatriated to return and establish themselves in Digby

County, Township Clare, a rough and jagged place on the southwest shore of St. Mary's Bay, remote from all habitation and accessible only from the sea through a narrow and rockbound inlet. A few promptly availed themselves of this meagre indulgence. Long deprivation and suffering seemed to have softened their memory of wrongs, and lent energy to their efforts. Labor for themselves had in it such pleasurable quality, that soon the rough lands were made to yield their treasures, which with ample facilities for fishing, enabled them to secure life's necessities, now to them the sweetest luxuries.

This experience is sufficiently heartrendering, but is, if possible, surpassed by those who, as the transports glided down the bay, gazed their last on their native lands as the flames shot upwards through the dense clouds of smoke. No fleet had ever borne on its decks such burthen of heart-breakings, decks that were moistened with torrents of tears. No desolation can be more dreary than the transition from home to homelessness; from loved land to one which at best had no allurements, that could only be a place for wandering and servitude; from the cheers of the family fireside to a bleak and dreary desert.

But grief will often exhaust itself and yield at last to passion, or, mingled together, they find expression by turns. Thus it was on one of these vessels, resulting in mutiny, overpowering the guards and running it ashore near St. John's River, the escaped prisoners finding refuge in friendly wigwams.

The fleet sped on its way, each vessel consigned by orders to certain of the colonies along the Atlantic coast, where their living freight was heartlessly set on shore, among those whose language was not understood, and each to the other odious by long hostility, and where the faith of each was deemed by the other a heresy, a wicked and unclean thing.

Imagination alone can follow their devious fortunes, as history has not preserved its details, more than at the hands of those so intensely disliked, they secured greater favors

and more real kindness than did the refugees at the hands of their Canadian friends. But it was not possible to comfort them. Wherever they might find refuge among the colonists, unhappiness was still their portion. If they had few wants, they were keenly felt, and could not be yielded; every tradition being a sacred thing to which their very souls were attached as by hooks of steel. Their unrest consequently, never appeased, necessarily separated, they soon scattered far and wide, in well nigh aimless purpose, some in after years working their way back to Digby and Madawaska. Others were sent from Virginia to England, or found refuge in the Norman land of their forefathers.

No legend tells us how or when a portion of these strangely unfortunate people reached Louisiana. The long stretch of inhospitable wilderness forbade a journey thither by land, but it may be readily surmised that some kindhearted captain took them by sea to the then far-away colony, where they could once more hear in speech the music of their native tongue.

Fancy will paint how memory of the harsh and forbidding clime they left behind, together with their suffering and poverty, must have vanished from their minds as they slowly wended their way out of the tropical gulf into beautiful Berwick Bay, and thence into Bayou Teche (Bio Tesh) extending northward two hundred miles, to receive the silent flowing Atchafalaya (A-shafala). We dwell with them on the scene. There is not a ripple on the sleeping Bayou, a deep waterway from two to three hundred feet wide, that, like a ribbon of silver, stretches far, far away; on the eastern shore standing then, as now, an unbroken forest of cottonwood and cypress, their lofty branches interlacing, all draped and festooned with Spanish moss, as if in sorrow that the waters into which their shadows fell must pass away to return no more. On the western shore their eyes were greeted with charming undulations, where the live oak spread its branches, and the palmetto rose with pretentious dignity; where roses, magnolias, jessamine, camellias and oleanders of spontaneous growth, loaded the

air with intoxicating perfume, seeming to offer a paradise where the rudest must long to linger and from which the blest could scarce wish to wander. Far up the stream, on the billowy lands the exiles established a colony, in which the gentle-souled Evangeline sought her lost lover; where the habits of their ancestors becoming firmly rooted, are still untarnished; where the spinning wheel and loom are heard in the cabin home; where girls wear the Norman bonnet and petticoat; where the village cure is their guide and remast, and church bells call to that form of devotion from which they have never swerved.

The shameless work was done; the expatriation made as complete as it was possible to do, by resort to the most frigid heartlessness and rugged violence. Nine thousand persons had been made impoverished wanderers on the face of the earth, and their vast wealth at the same time given to the winds and the flames.

Families had necessarily been separated, never to be reunited, save by such chance accident as could rarely occur. Fancy alone can picture the joy of such unexpected meeting, and none could be more touching than the story of the lovers kindly handed down to us by authentic history.

They were to have wed on the very day on which the male inhabitants of Grand Pre were made prisoners. On his way to the ship Jean stopped to kiss the kneeling, weeping maiden, and hurriedly said, "Adelle, trust in God and all will be well." On different vessels both were landed in New York, and the maiden, with her mother, found a home far up the Hudson, from which the former was carried away in an Indian raid and made the petted prisoner of a chief in the deep forest recesses of the Mohawk Valley.

In time Jean became a trader with the Indians, and in one of his long journeys one day "approached the wigwam of the old chief, and amid the forest shadows saw a young woman, with her back toward him, as she sat on a mat feathering arrows. On her head sat jauntily a French cap. With this, her fair neck suggested her nativity. He

approached her gently—their eyes met. The maiden sprang from the mat, and uttering a wild cry of joy and ‘Jean,’ fell fainting in his arms.”

Poetry and romance have vied with history in portrayal of the pitiable experience of this people, who left France with hope of bettering their lives in the rugged wilderness of a far away and unknown land.

Strangely enough its history presents the elements of romance, and poetry and story can scarce reach beyond the real limits of cheerless history.

A rugged land, an unostentatious people, ever on the rack of misfortune, but never swerving from the habits and faith of their fathers, Acadia has been made by the poet's magic pen the land of Evangeline, and she, the pure souled, the patient, ever loving and ever faithful, the representative of her people, whose cup was always well-nigh filled with bitterness, but who, like her:

“Meekly bowed their heads, and murmured,
Father, I thank Thee.”



COSTUMES OF THE ACADIANS.

Their Transportation and the Cause.

PART SECOND.

In 1740, difficulties between France and England, in consequence of court intrigues, kindled a needless war which terminated in the treaty of Aix-la Chapelle. The details of the treaty exhibited on the part of the French ministers such neglect and unpardonable ignorance that a new war began very soon on the borders of Acadia. The Governor of Canada placed garrisons along the frontiers, and the peace heretofore enjoyed by the Acadians ceased to exist.

In 1755 the envy which the prosperity and rich soil of the colony had excited among the militia of New England brought on this infamous and cruel spoliation, an eternal stain on the name and honor of England, which, unfortunately, is without more than one parallel in the history of that nation. This iniquitous decision was carefully concealed from the Acadians, in order not to provoke a suspicion that might have proved dangerous. A proclamation was issued calling on the people to assemble on the 5th of September, 1755, in their different parishes, to hear an important communication from the Governor. This deceit was not everywhere successful. At Beau-Basin, part of what had remained of the French Acadian population took at once to the woods. The people of Annapolis, accustomed of old to seek in the forests a refuge against the cruelties of war, did not wait for the completion of this horrible catastrophe, therefore a certain number only fell into the hands of their foes.

But in the district of Mines, which is the wealthiest in Acadia, good care had been taken to secure the success of the plot. This population, peaceful, industrious, and not as suspicious, perhaps, responded in a body to the call of the Governor, and being secretly surrounded by soldiery, were told they were prisoners of war, and their lands, tenements and household goods forfeited to the crown, and that on the 10th of September they were to embark for the British Colonies.

This awful communication fell like a thunderbolt and stunned the wretched families. Without arms, surrounded by soldiers and crushed beneath calamity, the Acadians had to bow to the atrocious law of a triumphant foe; and on the 10th of September the mournful expatriation took place.

That date had been fixed upon as the day of departure, and a man-of-war was in waiting for them. At daybreak drums were resounding in the villages, and at eight o'clock the ringing of the church bells told the sad and desolate Frenchmen that the time had come for them to leave forever their native land. Soldiers entered their houses and turned away men, women and children into the market place. Till then each family had remained together, and a silent sadness prevailed; but when the drums beat to embark; when the time had come to leave their native homes forever, to part with mother, relatives, friends, without hope of seeing them again, to follow strangers, that enmity, language, habits, and especially religion had made distasteful; crushed beneath the weight of their misery, the exiles melted into tears and rushed into each others' arms in a long and last embrace. The drums were resounding incessantly and the crowd was pushed on toward the ships anchored in the river. Two hundred and sixty young men were ordered to embark on board the first vessel. This they refused to do, declaring they would not leave their families. This request was immediately rejected, but they were forced into subjection by the troops, who, with fixed bayonets, advanced

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toward them, and those who tried to resist were wounded, leaving no alternative but to submit to this horrible tyranny. The road leading from the church to the shore was crowded with women and children, who, on their knees, greeted them with tears and their blessings, as they passed, bidding a sad adieu to husband or son, and extending to them trembling hands, which they sometimes could press in theirs, but which a brutal soldier compelled soon to be released. The young men were followed by their seniors, who passed through the same scene of sorrow and distress. In this manner were the whole male population put on board of the five transports stationed in the river; each of these were guarded by six officers and eighty privates. As soon as other vessels arrived, the women and children were put aboard, and when at sea the soldiers would sing, unmindful of such dreary misfortune. The tears of these poor, wretched people excited their cruelty, and even they had a good deal to suffer at the hands of the officers.

Revenge, mean cruelty, implacable cupidity, and every contemptible passion concurs to increase the infamy of this odious removal, and brand it as one of the most shameful pages of English history.

For several consecutive evenings the cattle would congregate around the smoking ruins of the homes, as if expecting the return of their owners, while the faithful watchdogs were howling on the deserted hearths.

According to the *Revue des Deux Mondes* of 1831, the number of prisoners thus removed from the district of Mines amounted to 4,000, and it may be said that the whole French population had been banished, as very few could escape.

From the following statement may be obtained an idea of the wealth of that country. Four thousand houses and five thousand stables were burned; twelve thousand oxen, three thousand cows, five thousand calves, six thousand horses, twelve thousand sheep and eight hundred pigs were taken possession of.

The American colonists, who had long since provoked the measures, obtained a grant of the land, and of course the numerous herds were not without profit to some one; so nothing had been neglected to succeed in that canton, which was the wealthiest of all.

How did these poor people live in the forest and wilderness? Through what succession of dangers and sufferings did they pass in the presence of speculators among whom their lands were divided? This we do not know. But we are aware that they felt the pangs of hunger and cold and defended their lives against wild beasts.

At the present time we find a small parish of Acadian origin, growing on the ruins of their country, in the midst of British invaders. The population are French Acadians and Catholics in every principle, and remain as an unconquerable protest of justice. They are the inhabitants, who, escaping from British persecution, took refuge in the woods and later emigrated into several localities of the St. Lawrence.

In 1755 the French commanding officer stationed himself at Beausejours with a small garrison of one hundred and fifty men, where they watched the movements of the British, who, later on, took the fort by a surprise. The women and children were able to escape and hide away in the woods, and were soon after joined by the commander with a few armed men. When they saw the flames destroying their houses, the blood of the old Acadians swelled in their veins, and they listened only to words of anger and revenge. They sent their wives and children into the woods and threw themselves suddenly on their enemies, who, broken by the furious and unexpected attack, returned to their ships, leaving forty-five of their comrades dead or wounded. After this dreadful slaughter, the French officer apportioned to the best of his ability the few remaining families, sending some to the islands of the Gulf, while others, loth to leave, began again to clear the woods along the shores; but the majority of those established on the shores had to take refuge in Canada.

In 1757 there remained on the borders of the Gulf of St. Lawrence very few families, being unobserved because of their small number and the remoteness of English settlements. The usual poverty of an uninhabited country made it anything but a desirable location.

As to the fate of the people dwelling along the river of Annapolis they threw themselves in the woods at the first suspicion, for they had for some time been accustomed to such tactics, but this time it was not a passing storm after which they could return to their fields and rebuild their wooden houses. The English levied on them a lasting war. One portion of the people of Annapolis were obliged to take refuge in forests and deserts, with the savages, while others scattered along the shores, where, poor and unnoticed, they earned their living as Acadian fishermen. There, for several years they succeeded in concealing their existence amid anxieties and privations, hiding carefully their small canoes, not daring to till the land, watching, with apprehension, any English sail, and dividing with their friends the, Indians, the supplies due to fishing and hunting.

The woodland remains yet, but to-day under its shade lives a race different in customs and language. It is only on the dreary and misty shores of the Atlantic that vegetate yet a few Acadian peasants, whose fathers came back from exile to die in their native land. In their cabins their spinning wheel and loom are yet in motion. The young girls still wear the Norman bonnet and petticoat, and in the evening, sitting near the fire, they repeat the history of the Gospel, while in its rocky caverns near by the ocean roars and answers in a disconsolate tune to the groans of the forest.

Since then, like the passing of a terrible storm, leaving wreck and ruin in its track, the persecution subsided, the Acadians made use of a kind of sufferance to establish themselves openly on the shores that had been their refuge for so many years. A few years after, they were joined in these solitary and wretched parts of the country by a small fraction of those transported by the English in 1755. Such is the

origin of the Acadian population in Canada that has given its name to the parish called Acadia, in the county of St. John, a place made immortal by the beautiful poem of Longfellow, and is known as the home of Evangeline.

A memorial of the Bishop of Quebec, dated October 30th, 1757, let us know their number, especially at Cape Sable, where a Catholic missionary comforted and sustained them against English persecution; this missionary had been called by them, and offered to defray his own expenses.

A certain number still remained scattered in different places, living miserably in the remotest cantons.

In 1763 permission was granted to Acadians that had been transported into Massachussetts to establish themselves on the southwest shore of their old country, near St. Mary's Bay.

The township of Clare, Digby county, was at the time a rough and jagged place, remote from all habitation and accessible only by sea. The Acadians, who seem to possess as an essential characteristic a constant energy and indomitable perseverance, were ready to recommence the struggle and work without loss of courage. They were not long in putting their shoulder to the wheel when the said inheritance, granted them by the compassion of their oppressors, came back into their hands. Industrious, hard workers, they soon cleared the land, built fishing boats, and created in this deserted country a sufficient thrift. All the authors are in accordance in their testimony as to the preservation of the language, national character and vigilance to maintain old customs.

Mr. Halliburton, Judge in Nova Scotia, had written the following in 1829: "While Germans have a tendency to disappear in the English population, the Acadians live together as much as possible, keeping their religion, language and peculiar customs. They never intermarry with their Protestant neighbors. Among themselves they speak but French." This great man's friendship for the Abbott Sigogue continued to the period of his election for

the county of Clair, which includes St. Mary's parish. Those two men of superior talent in their different careers, understood one another at their first meeting.

The author of Sam Slick took great interest in conversing with this French priest, whose life, ideas and habits contrasted so strangely with his surroundings. On his part the priest felt a warm friendship for this bright, intelligent, sensitive, sarcastic, free-of-all-prejudice Protestant, and he did not hesitate to notify his party that they could depend on his influence in favor of religious independence; and was one of the first to propose the abolition of the test oath, which barred all Catholics from holding a public office. Father Sigogne was one of the first promoters of the emancipation act presented and unanimously adopted by the Legislature of Nova Scotia—thanks to the masterly speech of Halliburton in 1827, the most remarkable part of which was his eulogy of the Acadians, of whose manners and habits he had made a special study during his residence in Annapolis, from 1722 to 1724. Says Beamish Murdock, referring to it, "It was the most magnificent and eloquent oratory that I ever heard." Halliburton was then mentally and physically in the prime of his life. The bracing air of his native home, Windsor, gave him a robust appearance, although his figure was still young and spare. On this occasion he literally carried his audience with him by the force of his eloquence, aided by his classical and historical studies, and by his appeal to the tenderest feelings of human nature.

This speech is too closely allied to our subject to pass without citing a few passages. After informing them that he represented a great number of Catholics, and that for several years he had been an intimate friend of their venerable pastor, Father Sigogne, "For what reason," he asked, "does the Protestant and Catholic mix in the same social reunions and live in perfect harmony? Why does the Catholic weep at the death of a Protestant friend he has loved while living? Why does he act as pall-bearer to his last resting place and mingle his tears with the dust that

covers his friend? If in Great Britain there is an evident feeling of hostility, it must be for other causes than a simple difference of religion. Ireland offers the saddest spectacle. While the Catholic is in duty bound and naturally inclined to support his priest, he is obliged by the laws of the country to pay tithe to the Protestant minister. Then you see churches without believers, ministers without congregations and bishops enjoying immense salaries without any duty to perform. These Catholics must be more or less than men. If they suffer all this without complaint they feel it and murmur. The Protestants, on their part, are continually clamoring against them and declare them as a bad class of people. All Catholic church property has passed into the hands of the Protestant clergy, also the tithe, lands and domains of the monasteries. Who can contemplate without regret those monasteries, venerable even in their ruins? What has become of those scientific, charitable and hospitable asylums, where the pilgrim, weary from a long journey, or the harassed traveler, stopped for rest and received a hearty welcome; where the poor received their daily food and implored with a heart full of gratitude the benedictions of the pious and good men that fed them; those asylums where knowledge held her assizes and science plunged her flaming hand into the darkness of barbarism and ignorance?

"Allow me, Mr. President, to linger as I often have in times long ago during hours and days, amidst those ruins; you also must have lingered to contemplate those desolate ruins. Tell me while contemplating those cloisters, and while your feet tread their mosaic paths through which the grass grows, have you not imagined hearing the solemn tread of the monks in their holy procession? Have you not imagined hearing the chimes of the bells pouring forth in the eve their soft and melancholy sounds through the quiet and solitary valley? Have you never heard the seraphic choirs diffuse the harmonious chant of their hymns through immense waves or aerial arches? Do not those columns in ruins, those Gothic arches, those cracked

and ivy covered walls appeal to you, while reminding you of the spoilers, at least to shed a tear to the memory of those great and good men who founded them? It has been said that Catholics were the enemies of liberty, but that assertion, like many others brought against them, is utterly false. Who established the grand chart? Who established our judges, our jury system, our magistrates, our sheriffs, etc.? It was the Catholics. It is to those slandered people that we owe everything of which we are proud to-day. Were they not loyal and brave? Ask the green hills of Chrystler's farm; ask at Chateauguay; ask the hills of Queenstown. They will tell you they cover the loyal and brave Catholic, the ashes of heroes that died for their country. Here their sentiments had full sway, because there was no cause for dissension and no properties to dispute. They were looked upon as good subjects and good friends. Friendship is natural to man's heart. It is like the ivy searching the oak, twining around its trunk, embracing its branches, surrounding them with beautiful wreaths, and climbing to the top balances its magnificent banner of foliage above, as though proud of having conquered the king of the forest.

"Look at the township of Clare. There you see a magnificent spectacle, a whole nation having the same habits, speaking the one language, and united in the one religion. It is a spectacle worthy of the admiration of man and the approbation of God. See their worthy pastor, the able Sigogue, at the rising of the sun surrounded by his people, rendering thanks to the Author of all gifts. Follow him to the sick bed; watch him diffuse the balm of consolation on the wounds of the afflicted. Follow him in his field, showing an example of industry to his people; in his cabinet instructing the innocent youth. Follow him in his chapel; you will see the savage from the desert with all his fierce and untamed passions. You will see him conquered and submissive in the presence of the Holy Man. You will hear him tell the Indian to recognize God in the calm and solitude of the forest, in the roar of the cataract, in the splendid order of the planetary system, in the regular order

of day and night; the Indian does not forget to thank God in his own dialect for the revelations the white man has taught him." Mr. Halliburton next recited the dispersing of the Acadians, then, as representatives of the descendants of those people, he demanded of the deputies the abolition of the test oath, not as a favor, as he would not accept it through compassion, but from their justice. "Any man," said he in conclusion, "who puts his hand on the New Testament, and says, 'This is my Book of Faith,' be he Catholic or Protestant, whatever may be the difference of opinion on certain doctrines, he is my brother and I embrace him. We are traveling different paths to the same God. In my pathway of life I meet a Catholic, I salute him, travel with him, and when we arrive at the term, *flammantia lumina mundi*; when this time comes, as it surely must; when this tongue that to-day expresses my thoughts, will chill in my mouth; when this breast that now breathes the pure air of heaven will refuse longer to serve me; when these earthly clothes will return to the earth from whence they came and will mingle with the dust of the valley, then with the Catholic I will turn a long, languishing look at the past, I will kneel with him, and instead of saying like the presumptuous Pharisee: 'Grace to God, I am not like this papist,' I will pray that being both of the same blood we will both be pardoned, and being brothers, we shall both be received above."

Such language from a Protestant, addressed to a Protestant audience, could not fail to produce its effects. At the same time he showed the impression of the holy life of the Abbot Sigogue had on all his surroundings. The Catholics of Nova Scotia, and particularly the Acadians, have placed beside the name of Mr. Halliburton the name of Mr. Uniacke, one of the most noted members of the Legislature, who supported the Deputy of Clare, if not with the same eloquence, at least with the same spirit of justice. With this victory dropped the last chain of the Acadians and opened an era of liberty that has made them one of the happiest nations on earth.



Providence granted the Abbot Sigogue seventeen years of life from that date to strengthen the good he had done in the midst of this population, becoming more and more docile to his voice and examples. He died of old age in 1844, at the age of eighty-five, taking with him the regrets of all his people, and everything that shows a man that life is worth living for, and the conviction of having accomplished his duty and deeds that never die. If every you cross St. Mary's Bay you will see Abbot Sigogue's tomb, surrounded with honor and respect. You will there see kneeling, the children whose parents he baptized, and of whom he made more worthy of the confessors of the last century. With the Abbot Sigogue died in Acadia the generation of Apostolical men that the tempest of '93 had scattered over her surface, divided them into three provinces, namely, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward's Isle. The small knots of families the missionaries had discovered on the verge of being lost that they organized, disciplined to whom they gave a part of their lives and virtues, have to-day become legions, full of brave and courageous people on whom we can depend. After increasing on their own merit by doubling every twenty-one years from 1785 to 1827, they doubled every twenty-two years from 1827 to 1871. The last official census of 1881 states that there is to-day 56,635 Acadians in New Brunswick, 41,219 in Nova Scotia, which forms part of Cape Breton, and 10,757 on Prince Edward's Isle. Those figures do not include the Acadian population of the Magdalena isles, which numbers over 3,000, nor those north of the Gulf and the Bay Des Chalems, Newfoundland and the State of Maine, belonging to the Madawaska group, which will raise about 20,000 souls, giving the Acadian population of all these regions a total of over 130,000 souls. As I said before, the Acadians are represented by men of their own race. In the Senate and House of Commons they have their deputies and even their local legislators. Men educated and noted among all classes of society, we no longer count the number of their

schools, at the head of which stands Memramcook's classical college, without a doubt the best Catholic institution in the Maritime Provinces. They have several convents devoted to the instruction of youth in each of the Provinces, and as far as the Magdalena Islands they control the election in many counties. They have their French papers that teach them their rights, their attachment to their language and to France, at the same time declaring their entire fidelity to England. In fact, they possess all the elements of progression possible to wish. The reunion of the British Provinces in Confederation strengthened them, at the same time binding them more closely to their brothers in Canada. In fifty years they will number half a million, and will be a power in the Maritime Provinces, as the Canadians are to-day in the Confederation.

France has been, until the middle of the last century, one of the greatest colonial powers in the world. The moment seems propitious to present to the public the researches we publish here. It is sad, indeed, in exhibiting the national character, to call back the painful end of efforts which, at their beginning, raised such bright and legitimate hopes; but we must overcome the natural repulsion generated by misfortune, and fix our minds on the sad recollections of the past, to derive from our disasters useful information to guide and strengthen our conduct in the future. We know that it is not without concern for us to follow the French people, abandoned in our old possessions and to show what has become of their posterity, through the difficulties and trials of a foreign domination. France seems to have forgotten that in the dark hours of her history important populations of her own blood, and in spite of misfortune, faithful to their origin, were forsaken by her. Who remembers to-day, Acadia, Canada, Louisiana, or even Mauritius, though so recently lost? Who has any recollection of places illustrated by so many heroic fights, and the devoted patriotism of their inhabitants? It is hard to awaken remembrances of our past glory, and to point out that France has been the first to commence this wonderful devel-

opment of civilization in North America, while losing, through her carelessness, the generous children she did not know how to defend.

Courageous colonists, who with energetic perseverance have faced persecutions and abandonment, you have kept everywhere, not only the tradition, but also the religion, customs, language and love of your country. Has not the time arrived to depart from that selfish indifference with which we rewarded their affection? Those to whom the greatness and prospects of France are yet worthy of consideration will understand that to call attention to the national question is to attend to the future eventually laid up for the French race.

Five hundred and seventy-nine miles in twenty-four hours by the Intercolonial road from Quebec to St. John, New Brunswick. The train, as usual on that line, was just late enough to enable you to miss the boat making three trips per week between St. John, Digby and Annapolis. Compelled am I to wait until night for the steamer from St. John to Yarmouth, Nova Scotia. These delays are so frequent that gossip says there is an understanding between the railroad conductors and St. John hotel keepers, the latter having the reputation of charging exorbitant prices to travellers. My experience at the Royal Hotel will confirm the above statement. Far away to the south the blue shores of Nova Scotia, separated here by the narrow but high chain of mountains, with a suspension bridge a hundred feet above the gorge, at the bottom of which the St. John River precipitates itself in a foaming cataract of elegance and strength. From this point can be witnessed one of nature's greatest wonders on the continent. The tide, that rises as high as twenty-six feet in this vicinity, engulfs itself in this gorge, repulses the current and permits for a few minutes vessels to mount above the cataract. In 1634 Baron La Tour, a Huguenot gentleman, built a fort on Point Carleton, opposite Navy Island, a few rods above the cataract, where he done a profitable business in pelts and trading with the Indians. This fort, now entirely demol-

ished, witnessed one of the most tragical events in the annals of America. Leaving Paris with his son Charles Amador, then fourteen years of age, Claude La Tour first thought of settling in Acadia, near Fort Royal. Seventeen years later Charles La Tour was elected Governor of Acadia through the death of Blencourt, son of Poutrincourt, whom he succeeded.

Claude De La Tour being taken prisoner by the English some time previous, was conducted to London where he was surrounded by caresses, made Baronet and married to the first Maid of Honor of Queen Henriette, of France, wife of Charles I. The same Princess that was immortalized by Bossuet, Claude De La Tour offered the King of England to secure him the keys of Fort St. Louis, the ably fortified post held by the French in Acadia. He sailed with two frigates for America and anchored under the walls of Fort St. Louis, of which but a few ruins remain, and proposed to his son to deliver the place to them. In return he assured him the greatest honors awaited him in London, and the supreme Government of Acadia in the name of the King of Great Britain. The father answered Charles De La Tour indignantly: "You are greatly mistaken if you think I would deliver this fort into the hands of the enemies of this State. I will defend it for the King, my master, as long as I have a breath in my body. I highly esteem the position offered me by the King of England, but will never purchase them at the price of treason. The Prince I serve is able to recompense me, but should he forget me, in my fidelity I will find the best of all rewards." Seeing there was no alternative, he landed his troops and cannon and attacked the fort, where he was gallantly repulsed and forced to retreat. Becoming at the same time a traitor to France and the cause of a disaster to England, the poor unfortunate dared not return to Europe. He advised his wife to return with the vessels to England, for there was nothing left him but shame and misery. "Never," assured this noble woman, "I have not espoused you to abandon you at the first reverse of fortune. Wherever you

will conduct me, and no matter to what misery you may be reduced, I will always be your faithful companion. My happiness shall always be to share your grief." La Tour then turned to his son, whose grandeur of soul he began to understand, and asked for clemency. The hero did not belie himself, but taking his father and family, gave them a house and a bountiful supply of everything necessary, on condition that he and his wife should never put their foot inside the fort, where they lived in peace and comfort several years.



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A SHARPSHOOTER.

ACADIAN RECOLLECTIONS.

BY MDE. MOREL DE LA DURANTAYE.

PART THIRD.

The writer of this, being a descendant of the Acadian exiles, ventures to offer a contribution to their sad history, partly derived from records and partly from impressions made by recollections of those among whom she was reared. It was true that those who made the terrible journey through the wilderness had been gathered by death before my birth, but I well remember seeing and conversing with their children, born after their departure, from their original homes, some on board the vessels that carried them to the English colonies, others in the forests during their wanderings in search of a place to rest.

Some of these people, then very old, had been nursed by their mothers all through the long, weary way, as in terror they fled they knew not where.

The sorrowful stories were so burned into my young heart that in my after-journeyings through the province, I have eagerly listened to repetitions by their descendants, who tell, with touching pathos, the incidents handed down in families from generation to generation. The length of time that has elapsed makes it impossible to now give primitive exactitude, and, therefore this record must bear somewhat the form of legends of my native village, where my story begins.

Going backward more than a century eastern Canada was a trackless wilderness. It was 1755 or 1756 when a few families were seen wending their way through it; all victims of the same misfortune, who, for some cause, now unknown, halted on the banks of the Montreal River, and decided that they were now sufficiently hidden and might venture to there establish a home.

It was a curious but not unnatural fancy, that the exiles usually named any new place that they might decide to occupy, after some one that was dear to them in the land from which they had been expelled.

This group had found a spot where they determined to begin anew the struggle of life, to try once more what unremitting toil would bring forth, and named it Little Acadia—after their lost country. Thus began a little colony, toward which other fugitives, as if by instinct, worked their weary way. The scenes then occurring there would soften the flintiest heart. The poor unfortunates arrived one after another, in straggling groups and wholly destitute, seeming like parts of a wreck after a storm, drifted by the winds to the same shore. Fathers with large families came, accompanied, perhaps, by some of their neighbors. Often poor young girls lived through the journey, while their aged parents died by the way from hardship and starvation, finding their last rest in the gloomy forest. Groups of these wanderers were often partly or wholly lost in the wilderness to be seen no more. The survivors, filled with grief for those that had disappeared by the way, and embittered toward those who had caused their misery, could but recount the painful story and weep. Occasionally an old mother, whose love for her children was great enough to surmount every obstacle and bear with all the hardships of the journey, would finally reach the place that was to witness the last sacrifice of her life. In her dying hour she might be heard asking God to bless all the poor exiles around her, and then, in a way so innocent and pure that you would know they were the last wish of a loving mother's heart, hear her cry, "My children, where are they? Alas!

God only knows, but if any of you ever see them tell them that their old mother died, blessed them, and asking God to bless and protect them from the tyranny of the English, and at last to forgive them."

In pain and poverty, sighs and tears, thus was Little Acadia begun, and in the midst of these humble unfortunates, in the fields close by the cottage, the erection of which was just commenced, my father was born; and in that same little colony I first saw the light of day.

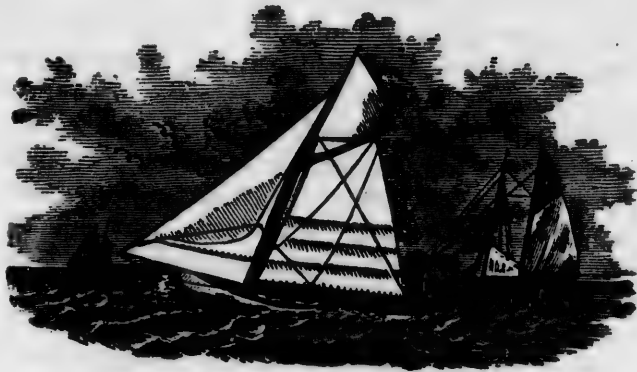
This constitutes but the means of insight into the multitude of oft-told experience, of trials and sufferings that had seared the souls of the exiles, had prepared their soil for the growth of the tares of hate, that to this day flourish in luxuriance.

From it we naturally turn to the causes that so crushed this people as if beneath a heel shod with iron.

In the province now known as Nova Scotia, at an early day lived a people whose land was known to them and the world as Acadia. They were all French and lived in distinct settlements, somewhat widely scattered. One of these was known at the time as Port Royal, which was captured by the English in 1710, and then named Annapolis, by which title that colony was ever afterward designated. It is to the people of this colony that this sketch is chiefly devoted, as my ancestry was among those who escaped from it, as well as many of those with whom I spent my early years, and from whom I received the early and lasting impressions.

Port Royal was the most valuable point owned by the French in America. In 1711 all the Acadian peninsula suffered the fate of Port Royal. The French abandoned it by a treaty in 1714.

Acadia thus passed under the English sceptre, and so remained for nearly fifty years, when Nicholson, Governor of the province, issued an order compelling the inhabitants to come before September 5th, 1755, and show submission to the English crown by taking an oath, or forfeit their right as English citizens. This they had before been required to do under direction of Phillips, who then represented the



FROM MONTREAL TO LA PRAIRIE.

English government, and who granted the rights of citizens without being required to bear arms, and permitted them to worship as they chose, and that this should be perpetual. The Acadians reminded Governor Nicholson of the promise of Phillips, and the reserve he had granted in the oath required of them. They also reminded him of the cruelty of requiring them to fight against their own people, man to man, but received in answer that Phillips had been censured by the King for the rash promises he had made, and that they must now submit to the King. There had been deceit in politics in order to keep them there against their own will, and the result of this hideous crime could have but one result.

The Acadians asked that in case they desired to leave the country they would be allowed to dispose of their property. They were then informed that they could not either sell their property or leave the country. They then returned to their fireside, some in despair, others waiting in hopes, but not one would swear allegiance to England and raise his arm against France. Then began the tyranny of the English administration; then those poor but heroic people by stealth left their native home, carrying nothing with them but their hatred for their persecutors. They left one after another, men and women holding on their arms their aged fathers and mothers. Their conversations were held in low tones and ceased entirely on the threshold, the head of the family first, then followed all the representatives of a third generation, each with a load of some kind. The procession started silently through the darkness to the harbor, where lay the ship awaiting their embarkation and transfer to the Canadian shore.

They left unnoticed by any one, as they feared arousing the authorities, who were already on the alert. Arrived upon the beach amidst darkness, and blinded with tears, there was, of course, some confusion; people could be heard in low voices calling one another, and sailors letting go their lines, but soon all noise ceased. Occasionally you would hear a few between their sobs bidding good-bys to

their country, never to return. The anguish was general, even little babes awoke from sleep and cried, as a cold breeze would pass over their face; they knew it was not their mother's caressing breath. The boat began to rock; they felt it was not the rocking of their cradle, and theirs were the last cries borne back to Acadia.

Go, now, you barbarous instrument of politics; go and distribute on other shores your missions of tyranny and outrage. Hidden in the forests on the beaches, and in the midst of solitude are your victims. Do not flatter yourself with the hope that their voices are silenced forever; that their footsteps will never again return to their native soil; that their stories will never reach the ears of the civilized world, that God and the world will leave them eternally without justice, and that you will continue your reign of destruction without punishment. No! The voice of the children shall not be hushed; it will outlive these courts upheld by the tears and suffering of a nation, rocked in the cradle of their misery and cries of anguish. Go, ye tyrants; the calumny will fall upon your memory and follow you to your tombs.



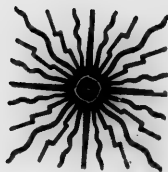
ACADIAN FOREST SCENE.

21 Midnight Poem.

While waiting at midnight with four in the room,
My brain, as the morning dawned, weighing
With thoughts of the little ones now left alone,
And their grief my mind was portraying—
Bereft tonight of their kind father,
Sorrow comes to young and old—
I was thinking of the daylight
And the news which must be told,
When with daylight they'd awaken
And with one accord all rush
For the first fond kiss from papa,
And I—how sad—their hearts must crush.

Yes, to his eternal rest he is gone forever,
From the ones who loved him well,
Who will forget him never—
Shall we ever meet again?
Yes, the splendor will be greater,
For when we meet 'twill be above,
And there see our Creator!
We can no longer watch and mourn
For him—the loved one,
Whose life on earth to us was but a charm.
We can but hope that his soul will be
As welcome in heaven
As the parting was sad for me.
When we four have passed away,
Will some one remember us,
And will the remembrance be as sad
As the one who has gone today?
Will we be remembered
By friends once near and dear;
Or will we be forgotten,
As though we never had been here?

Memory, sad memory,
With aching hearts so sore,
Comes sorrowing and sorrowing
Alike to rich and poor;
Though his image I will always keep,
Defy years to efface;
"I will keep my path way clear and bright,
And in heaven I may also find
The true and only light.



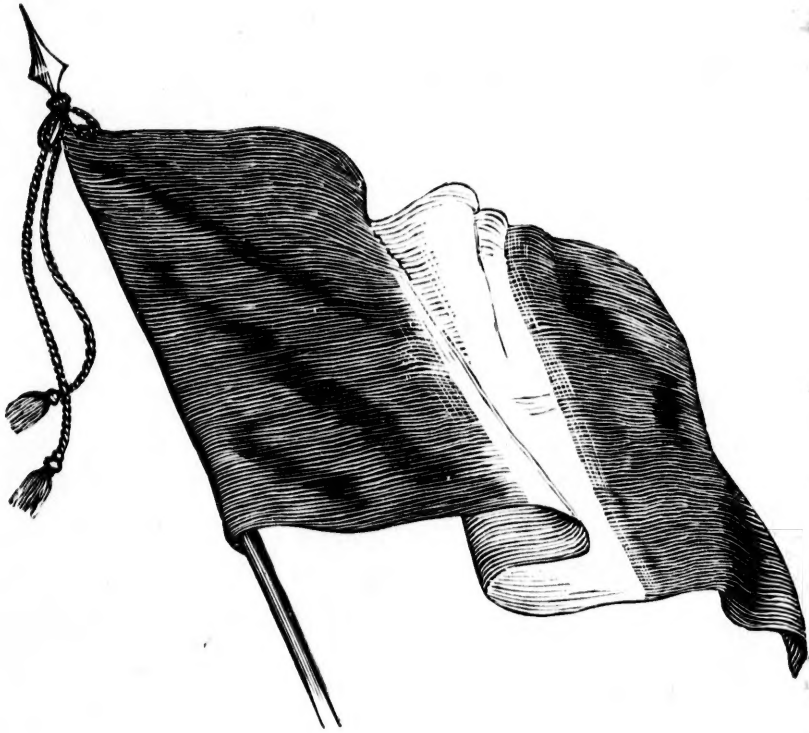


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